

Claim 1 as amended claims in part a controller coupled to the vehicle control system, the controller adapted to receive a vehicle position signal, and further adapted to receive a weather signal. The weather signal is received through broadcast radio transmissions. Similarly, amended Claim 12 claims in part a controller adapted to receive a vehicle position signal and a weather signal, and to produce a control signal in response thereto. In Claim 12, the weather signal is indicative of a vehicle operator's manual inputs. Finally, amended Claim 16 in part claims a method including the step inputting a weather signal.

As neither Brachert et al. nor Mine et al. disclose a controller adapted to receive a weather signal and produce a control signal in response thereto, the combination of these two references cannot teach or suggest the invention claimed in Claims 1, 12, and 16. The Examiner asserts that Hiwatashi, in disclosing a temperature gauge, adequately compensates for the lack of disclosure in Brachert et al. and Mine et al.

As amended however, claims 1, 12, and 16 all claim material that is patentably distinct from the implementation of a temperature gauge. In its many embodiments, the weather signal of the present invention may comprise a manually inputted set of information, a broadcast radio signal, a set of values detected by a plurality of vehicle sensors, or some combination of the three. Hiwatashi does not teach, suggest, or disclose any of the foregoing embodiments of the weather signal as described and claimed in the present invention. Accordingly, Hiwatashi viewed in combination with Brachert et al. and Mine et al. cannot adequately teach, suggest, or disclose the invention as claimed in claims 1, 12, and 16.

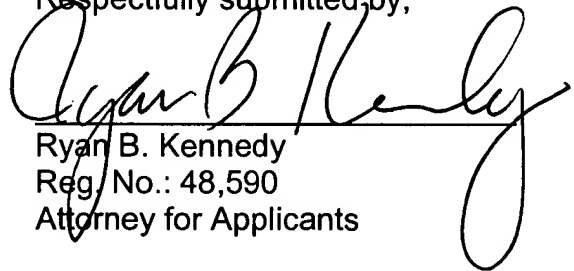
Therefore, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 12, and 16 are non-obvious in view of Brachert et al., Mine et al., and Hiwatashi, and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw his rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 2-10, 13-14, and 17-25 are dependent claims that depend from an independent claim discussed above. As Claims 1, 12, and 16 are in allowable form, Applicant submits that Claims 2-10, 11-14, and 17-21 should also be placed in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully submits that the previous remarks and appended amendments fully respond to the Office Action dated August 23, 2002. Accordingly, Applicant asserts that Claims 1-10, 12-14, and 16-25 are in condition for allowance and such action by the Examiner is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments as a result of the filing of this paper to our Deposit Account 23-1925 – a duplicate of this paper is enclosed for that purpose.

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Appendix A

1. (TWICE AMENDED) A vehicle control system for controlling a performance characteristic of the vehicle[;] comprising:

a controller coupled to the vehicle control system, the controller adapted to receive a vehicle position signal, the controller employing the position signal to determine at least one characteristic pertinent to the operation of the vehicle control system and outputting a control signal, and further adapted to receive a weather signal;

wherein said weather signal affects said determination of said characteristic, said weather signal received through broadcast radio transmissions;

and

wherein the vehicle control system receives the control signal and tailors its performance in response thereto.

12. (TWICE AMENDED) A vehicle control system for controlling a vehicle comprising:

an anti-lock brake system for controlling a brake force exerted by a brake caliper to limit vehicle skidding in a predetermined manner;

a traction control system for controlling acceleration of the vehicle to limit wheel slip in a predetermined manner;

a stability system for controlling a yaw rate of the vehicle in a predetermined manner; and

a controller coupled to the anti-lock brake system, the traction control system and the stability system, the controller adapted to receive a vehicle position signal and a weather signal, and to produce a control signal in response thereto, the control signal including a road surface type;

wherein the weather signal is indicative of a vehicle operator's manual inputs; and

wherein the anti-lock brake system, the traction control system and the stability system receive the control signal and tailor their performance in response thereto.

16. (TWICE AMENDED) A method for controlling a vehicle having a vehicle control system, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a controller for receiving a vehicle position signal [and a weather signal];

inputting a weather signal indicative of a proximate weather condition;

determining at least one characteristic pertinent to the operation of the vehicle control system from the position signal;

generating a control signal based the at least one characteristic pertinent to the operation of the vehicle control system; and

enhancing the performance of the vehicle control system based on the control signal.

22. (NEW) The vehicle control system of claim 1 wherein said weather signal is manually inputted by a vehicle operator.

23. (NEW) The vehicle control system of claim 12 wherein weather signal is received through broadcast radio transmissions.

24. (NEW) The vehicle control system of claim 12 wherein the weather signal includes information from a plurality of sensors coupled to the vehicle.

25. (NEW) The method of claim 16 wherein the step of inputting a weather signal includes manually inputting information indicative of the weather.

26. The method of claim 16 wherein the step of inputting a weather signal includes receiving a broadcast radio transmission indicative of proximate weather conditions

27. (NEW) The method of claim 16 wherein the step of inputting a weather signal includes the step of receiving information from a plurality of sensors coupled to the vehicle.